AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. - 103. (canceled)

104. (currently amended) A tubular insert for insertion into an ear canal of a wearer, said tubular insert comprising:

a radially flexible, substantially axially rigid sound conduction tube constructed and adapted for removable connection to a receiver section of a hearing device and for comfortable and consistent insertion into and removal from the ear canal, for delivering sound ~~in a sealing manner toward and in proximity of~~ to the tympanic membrane ~~of said wearer~~ when said tubular insert is worn in the ear canal; and

~~one or more seals concentrically positioned over~~ a first concentric seal projecting radially from said sound conduction tube ~~, forming~~ to flexibly engage the wall of the bony part of the ear canal in a sealing manner and form a first confined space between ~~a medial one of~~ said ~~seals~~ seal and ~~said~~ the tympanic membrane when said tubular insert is worn in the ear canal; ~~and~~

~~a skeletal frame incorporated in said sound conduction tube to render said tubular insert radially flexible and axially rigid for comfortable and consistent insertion of said tubular insert in said ear canal~~ said seal having a relatively small pressure vent extending therethrough, and adapted to cooperate with a second concentric seal projecting radially from said sound conduction tube or the receiver section to flexibly engage the wall of the cartilaginous part of the ear canal in a sealing manner and form a second confined space between said seals, said second seal having a relatively larger occlusion-relief vent extending therethrough;

whereby, when said tubular insert is worn in the ear canal, said vents provide substantial acoustic sealing for sound delivered in said first space, while directing occlusion sounds away from the tympanic membrane.

104. (clean copy as amended) A tubular insert for insertion into an ear canal of a wearer, said tubular insert comprising:

a radially flexible, substantially axially rigid sound conduction tube constructed and adapted for removable connection to a receiver section of a hearing device and for comfortable and consistent insertion into and removal from the ear canal, for delivering sound to the tympanic membrane when said tubular insert is worn in the ear canal; and

a first concentric seal projecting radially from said sound conduction tube to flexibly engage the wall of the bony part of the ear canal in a sealing manner and form a first confined space between said seal and the tympanic membrane when said tubular insert is worn in the ear canal; said seal having a relatively small pressure vent extending therethrough, and adapted to cooperate with a second concentric seal projecting radially from said sound conduction tube or the receiver section to flexibly engage the wall of the cartilaginous part of the ear canal in a sealing manner and form a second confined space between said seals, said second seal having a relatively larger occlusion-relief vent extending therethrough;

whereby, when said tubular insert is worn in the ear canal, said vents provide substantial acoustic sealing for sound delivered in said first space, while directing occlusion sounds away from the tympanic membrane.

105. (currently amended) The tubular insert of claim **104**, wherein:

said ~~tubular insert~~ sound conduction tube is constructed and adapted to be disposable for selective replacement thereof.

106. (currently amended) The tubular insert of claim **104**, wherein:

said ~~tubular insert~~ sound conduction tube is constructed and adapted to possess structural characteristics of kink-resistance and non-collapse when inserted in said ear canal.

107. (currently amended) The tubular insert of claim **104**, wherein:

said ~~tubular insert~~ sound conduction tube has generic configurations and sizes to accommodate any of a variety of ear canal sizes and shapes.

108. (original) The tubular insert of claim **104**, wherein:

said sound conduction tube comprises multiple tubing for either multiple channel sound conduction or venting.

109. (original) The tubular insert of claim **104**, wherein:
said sound conduction tube is at least 8 mm in length.

110. (original) The tubular insert of claim **104**, wherein:
said sound conduction tube has an inside diameter not greater than 2 mm.

111. (original) The tubular insert of claim **104**, wherein:
said sound conduction tube is constructed and adapted to provide a boost for conducted sounds at the high range of audiometric frequencies.

112. (currently amended) The tubular insert of claim **104**, wherein:
~~said at least one~~ the first concentric seal comprises a pressure vent in the form of a hole, cavity, slit, or tube having a diameter or width not greater than 0.5 mm.

113. (currently amended) The tubular insert of claim **112**, wherein:
said pressure vent is incorporated directly on ~~said at least one~~ the first concentric seal.

114. (original) The tubular insert of claim **112**, wherein:
said pressure vent is indirectly incorporated along said sound conduction tube or a connector associated with said sound conduction tube.

115. (currently amended) The tubular insert of claim **104**, wherein:
said sound conduction tube is constructed and adapted to extend medially past ~~said at least one~~ the first concentric seal toward said tympanic membrane, when said tubular insert is worn in said ear canal.

116. (currently amended) The tubular insert of claim **104**, wherein:
said ~~one or more~~ seals are hollow and of generally cylindrical shape.

117. (currently amended) The tubular insert of claim **104**, wherein:
said ~~one or more~~ seals are flanged, mushroom shaped, or clustered.

118. (currently amended) The tubular insert of claim **104**, wherein:

the cross sectional perimeter of each of said ~~one or more~~ seals is either circular, elliptical, or oval, and inferiorly pointed.

119. (currently amended) The tubular insert of claim **104**, wherein:

said ~~one or more~~ seals are constructed and adapted to contact the walls of said ear canal with a span of at least 2 mm longitudinally, when said tubular insert is worn in said ear canal.

120. (currently amended) The tubular insert of claim **104**, wherein:

at least one of said ~~one or more~~ seals further comprises medication material selected from a group including anti-bacterial and anti-microbial agents.

121. (currently amended) The tubular insert of claim **104**, wherein:

at least one of said ~~one or more~~ seals further comprises lubricant to facilitate insertion and removal of said tubular insert into and from said ear canal.

122. (currently amended) The tubular insert of claim **104**, including:

means for removably connecting said ~~tubular insert~~ sound conduction tube to ~~a~~ said receiver section ~~within a hearing device~~.

123. (original) The tubular insert of claim **122**, wherein:

said connecting means comprises a snap-on, threaded, spring-loaded, pressure-fit, or side-slide mating mechanism.

124. (currently amended) The tubular insert of claim **122**, further including:

a tube connector for concentric coaxial connection of said ~~tubular insert~~ sound conduction tube over said receiver section.

125. (original) The tubular insert of claim **104**, including:

means adapting said tubular insert for hearing enhancement of a hearing impaired

wearer.

126. (original) The tubular insert of claim **104**, including:

means adapting said tubular insert for audio communications.

127. (canceled) The tubular insert of claim **104**, wherein:

at least one of said seals is positioned in the bony part of said ear canal.

128. (new) A tubular insert for an ear canal of a wearer, comprising:

a sound conduction tube constructed and adapted for removable connection to a sound receiver module of a hearing device, for comfortable insertion into and removal from the ear canal, and when inserted, to deliver sound received by the module to the tympanic membrane;

at least one appendage on the sound conduction tube to establish a substantially acoustically sealed space in which the sound is to be delivered to the tympanic membrane; and

another appendage on the sound conduction tube or on the sound receiver module for cooperating with said at least one appendage to direct occlusion sounds away from the tympanic membrane when said tubular insert is connected to said sound receiver module and worn in the ear canal.

129. (new) A tubular sound conduction tube for removable connection to a sound receiver section of a hearing device and insertion into an ear canal of a wearer, the sound conduction tube comprising:

a venting system coupled to the sound conduction tube for enabling delivery of sound to the tympanic membrane within an acoustically sealed space while simultaneously directing occlusion sounds away from the tympanic membrane, when the sound conduction tube is connected to said sound receiver section and inserted in the ear canal.

130. (new) A canal sound conduction tube for a hearing device, comprising:

a tube portion for insertion into an ear canal of a user in proximity to the eardrum; and

means operatively associated with the tube portion and the hearing device for delivering received sounds to an acoustically sealed space about the eardrum and concurrently directing occlusion sounds away from the eardrum, when worn by the user.